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LETTER DATED 18 SEPTEMBER 1998 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 16 September 1998, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

98-28423 (E) 280998

Annex

Letter dated 16 September 1998 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the twentieth monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) (see appendix). I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Appendix

Monthly report to the Security Council on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. There are approximately 32,500 troops currently deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and from 21 non-NATO countries.

2. Over the reporting period (21 July-20 August), SFOR continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols. Approximately 2,770 sorties were flown by combat aircraft, and the SFOR helicopter fleet flew approximately 132 hours.

3. SFOR's Multinational Specialized Unit became operational on 20 August. Operating as an integral part of SFOR under the same rules of engagement as other elements, the Unit will have an enhanced capability to support the local authorities in responding to civil disorder, without engaging in police functions, in close cooperation with the Office of the High Representative and the International Police Task Force (IPTF).

4. SFOR has continued its monitoring of crossing points on the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its inspections of government factories in order to help ensure compliance with the prohibition on the transport of weapons established by the Security Council in its resolution 1160 (1998). No reports of non-compliance were received in the current reporting period.

5. On 23 July, in conformity with the restructuring agreement concluded by the Office of the High Representative in February, SFOR withdrew from the transmission tower used by Srpska Radio Television in Veliki Zep, in Multinational Division North. Following an agreement with the Republika Srpska authorities, use of the Srpska Radio Television Tower in Trebevic, in Multinational Division South-east, will be shared between Srpska Radio Television and SFOR, with SFOR providing local security.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

6. The parties remain substantially in compliance with most military provisions of the Peace Agreement across the whole area of operations. However, during the reporting period, there were a number of arson attacks on houses belonging to all three ethnic groups, and a series of explosions in the Sarajevo area during the first week of August.

7. Following the murder in Pale on 7 August of Mr. Srdjan Knezevic, the Deputy Chief of the Serb Public Security Centre in Sarajevo, SFOR increased its patrols in the Pale and Sokoloc areas. At the beginning of August, SFOR patrols were also increased in Stolac in response to threats made by employees of the Renner Company against members of IPTF during an inspection of Stolac market, and subsequently, in response to a confrontation with a SFOR inspection team on 13 August.

8. During the reporting period, SFOR troops conducted a total of 346 inspections of military weapons storage sites: 75 Bosniac, 81 Bosnian Croat, 164 Bosnian Serb and 26 Federation. No significant discrepancies were noted and no weapons were confiscated. In line with the SFOR policy of reducing the overall number of weapons sites, 45 of the 136 weapons storage sites which were due to be closed between 10 June 1998 and 28 February 1999 have now been closed, a reduction of about one third.

9. The Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade and the Police Unit for the Protection of Persons and Buildings of the Republika Srpska Specialist Police remain in compliance with the terms of the Peace Agreement and with the requirements set out by SFOR on 15 August 1997. In line with the Police Restructuring and Training Programme, led by IPTF and monitored by SFOR, 577 officers of the Brigade completed human dignity training between 22 June and 17 July.

10. During the reporting period, SFOR troops monitored a total of 435 training and movement activities: 30 Bosniac, 15 Bosnian Croat, 250 Bosnian Serb and 140 Federation. SFOR imposed on the Bosnian Serb 701st Brigade a ban on training and movement from 27 July to 3 August, and a similar one on the First Bosnian Croat Corps, from 25 to 28 July, in each instance for non-compliance with the Common Licence Plate Programme. In addition, a training and movement ban was imposed from 19 August to 5 September on the First and Second Bosnian Croat Guard Brigades from the Caplinja Instruction Centre.

11. In the period ended 1 July, SFOR monitored a total of 78 demining activities. On 1 July 1998, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre assumed responsibility for humanitarian mine clearing. The Entity Armed Forces are now insured and accredited by the Centre and are conducting operations in accordance with international standards for humanitarian mine clearance. There are currently no bans imposed on the Entity Armed Forces for non-compliance with mine-clearing operations.

Cooperation with international organizations

12. Within its capabilities, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre, working routinely with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), IPTF, including in its inspections of local police stations, the Office of the High Representative, the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

13. SFOR continues to support OSCE in its preparations for the September elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 16 July a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on SFOR support to OSCE during the election period. Essentially, SFOR will provide limited security for ballot warehouses and emergency back-up medical evacuation services. It will also support the monitoring of polling stations and regional counting centres. The official election campaign started on 2 August.

14. SFOR continues to provide assistance to the Office of the High Representative in the field of civil air traffic. As reported last month, Mostar airport opened to civil traffic on 7 July. With respect to Sarajevo

airport, the revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding which will permit cargo operations and allow commercial aircraft to remain on the apron overnight are awaiting approval by the Council of Ministers. Civil operations into Tuzla airport are expected to begin in early September.

15. SFOR continues to play an active role in providing support to the efforts of the Office of the High Representative to establish joint institutions, particularly the Standing Committee on Military Matters. At its meeting on 13 August, the Standing Committee directed the Entity Governments to bring forward legislation to provide for a continuing amnesty with regard to weapons and munitions, and work continues on an expanded scheme for military helicopter flights across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line.

Outlook

16. Tension is expected to continue to rise in the run-up to the September elections. Acts of intimidation and violence towards displaced persons and refugees can also be expected to continue.